

Survey Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2015

8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Radisson Hotel

18118 International Blvd., SeaTac, WA 98188

Board Members Present:

Tim Kent, PLS, Rural, Chair

Walt Dale, PLS, Urban

Bruce Dodds, PE/PLS, Multi-Discipline

Martin Paquette, PLS, Education

Not present: Steve Palmen, PLS, Government

Staff Present:

Pat Beehler, PLS

Kris Horton, PLS

Guests:

Casey Kaul, Pierce Co. Auditor's office – Auditors Recording Committee Liaison

Jim Coan, PLS, LSAW liaison

Paul Galli, PLS, WCCS liaison

Gary Rowe, PE – Wash. Assoc. of County Engineers (WACE)

Owen Carter, PE – Snohomish County

Jim Wengler – Board of Registration (brief attendance)

Aaron Blaisdell – Board of Registration (brief attendance)

Michael Villnave – Board of Registration (brief attendance)

Chair Tim Kent called the meeting to order at 8:07 a.m.

The minutes of the March 2015 meeting were unanimously approved.

Monument Protection

Kris reported that 130 Permits and 26 Completion Reports were submitted between March 15 and August 6, 2015.

Since DNR is still experiencing a lack of Completion Reports being submitted, it was suggested that continual non-compliance by an individual/county/city be reported to the B.O.R. They can have a discussion with the engineer/surveyor. It was also suggested to educate about it through the "Did you know?" articles, DNR Listserv and the B.O.R. Journal.

Update on DNR Presentations:

December 10, 2015 Final

It was suggested that Kris & John contact Idaho & Oregon survey organizations about presenting at their conferences and/or chapter meetings. Jim Coan offered to distribute information through the NSPS.

Chip seal Memorandum of Understanding

On July 6, 2015, a draft MOU was sent out to the county engineers, via Walt Olsen at the County Road Administration Board (CRAB). The MOU was presented as a way for the counties to fulfill the requirements of the Permit for monument removal/destruction, when performing a chip seal road project. Instead of submitting a Permit application for each chip seal project, they would agree to send in a list of the roads that are expected to be chip sealed each year, with the agreement that the survey monuments would be protected and made available when the project was completed. Gary Rowe, representing the WACE asked that the reference to the counties being responsible for the city projects be removed. Kris agreed and said it was meant to only refer to any city road chip seal projects that the county may do for them. Gary also was concerned with the county engineering having to submit multiple lists and suggested going through C.R.A.B. to get the project lists, as the counties are already required to submit those to C.R.A.B yearly. After much discussion, it was decided that Kris will work with Gary on looking at having the MOU between the PLSO and the Association, instead of each individual county. That way, each county is covered and C.R.A.B. would also be involved.

Report from Auditor's Recording Committee liaison to the SAB

Casey reported that the recording fee will go up \$1, per House Bill 2195. The Heritage Fee, which supports state libraries and state archives will go up from \$2 to \$3 on October 9th.

Casey brought up an issue that the recording offices have been dealing with lately. They're getting maps submitted with notary stamps that are in blue ink, instead of black. She stated that a blue notary stamp and signature are the standard for most small documents (non-survey). She provided some examples of how the blue ink scans. After much discussion, it was decided by the Board members and DNR staff that the blue notary ink on a survey map can be accepted as long as it is legible when scanned. Kris will send a notice to Vicky Dalton (Auditor's Recording Committee) outlining the decision. Vicky will distribute to all the recording offices.

Casey reported that state archives is accepting the map mylars from the counties. Kris and Pat met with Steve Excel and Russel Wood of state archives to discuss the future steps of survey map storage. Archives would like to move towards digital storage. Russel will be working with Kris and Pat on contacting the counties about making sure that good scans are available for all the maps that will be sent to archives. They will also be looking at what needs to be done to allow auditors to accept digital maps for recording. Laws will need to be changed.

PLSO Website

DNR (the agency as a whole) transferred over to the new website format/content the first part of July 2015. The URL for the agency is the same (www.dnr.wa.gov), but the location of the PLSO is new <http://www.dnr.wa.gov/public-land-survey-office>. Kris is working with the communications office to clean up the new PLSO webpage. Some of the data is missing or incorrect. The fixes will likely happen in early October, at the latest.

December 10, 2015 Final

LSAW Liaison to the SAB – Jim Coan (attending for Mel Garland)

Jim reported that the LSAW Education Committee will continue to have the PLS refresher courses available online. The classes were recorded and sent out to about 70 users. There will be no “live” classes. LSAW is still deciding on the cost for the classes (the revenue goes to the chapters, based on attendees from that chapter). They will be reviewing and re-doing “classes” when attendance/interest wanes. These classes are targeted to people getting ready to sit for the PLS exam, but is available to anyone.

Jim reported that LSAW is working to put together classes to educate the profession about the new datum set to release in 2022, so that there is a good understanding of it before it goes into effect. The class will be offered at the conferences and likely to local chapter meetings.

Walt noted the nationwide problem of the profession “dying” and wondered if NSPS and/or LSAW were working on anything to help recruit into the profession. There was discussion about the NSPS Certified Survey Technician (CST) program and some of the Washington state colleges that are still offering surveying studies.

Pat reported that the LSAW/WCCS joint monument preservation committee is looking at the source of funding as a raise to the Real Estate Excise Tax percentage instead of a map recording fee. This was suggested by Vicky Dalton who said that an additional 0.03% (three-hundredths of a percent) on the tax should be enough for the funding needed and would be a more stable source of revenue.

Liaison to Auditors Recording Committee – Walt Dale

Walt reported that the Auditor’s Recording Manual (draft) is still being finalized by the auditors and has not yet been sent out to the recording offices. Walt is still working on possible changes to the recording checklist (per WAC 332-130-050).

Kris will work with Casey and Walt on getting information from the recording offices of what questions answered and/or information provided in the customer brochure that Kris will create.

Affidavits of Minor Correction (AMC) of a Survey Map

At the last SAB meeting (March 19, 2015) the question came up about how the AMC was allowed to be used to amend a survey map/short plat/bla, etc. Since the last meeting, research was done and Kris contacted Jerry Broadus to see if he had any information, since Mel had mentioned that he remembers Jerry being involved with that discussion within LSAW. Jerry provided copies of notes, memos, and letters about the 1992-1993 LSAW involvement in the use of the AMCs. Kris distributed the information to the SAB for review. Bruce mentioned that back in the early 1990’s many maps were still hand drafted and likely the AMCs were a way to avoid the hassle of having to re-hand draft a map. Kris stated that most of the time the AMCs do not get “connected” to the map it is amending and many times copies of the AMCs are not give to the PLSO unless staff takes the time to search county websites for them, or contact the counties to get copies. There were examples given of AMCs being used for errors that were not minor, one surveyor using an AMC to amend another surveyor’s map, and other examples of the form being misused. The Board voted and unanimously agreed that AMCs should no longer be accepted to amend a survey map, as they do not comply with WAC 332-130-050(3).

Map Recording Fee

Kris was contacted by the Auditors Recording Committee and asked to clarify what type of Boundary Line Adjustments were to be charged the \$64 map fee. The questions were asked due to the fact that some county and cities use a different format and procedure for BLA's. Some require a survey map and some do not. Some require or allow BLA's in a small format (letter/legal size), some with a map and some without. One county records the BLA approval, but does not require that a survey map of the BLA be recorded. After much discussion it was decided that if the recording office records it as a BLA "type" (they have to choose one in their system in order to index and record), then the fee would apply. Also, there must be a map or sketch of some type within the BLA document. Kris will work with Casey to come up with a statement memo to send to the recording offices.

Rule Making

These items were discussed for rule making:

Revisions to WAC 332-130:

No discussion at this time.

Accuracy Standards for a Traverse (WAC 332-130-090):

The group went over Martin's draft from December 2014. There was a question about keeping the portion setting the standards for the "traditional" traverse. Walt explained about the example he presented at the last meeting showing the difference between traditional and GPS methods of the same traverse. Jim asked if the profession can actually meet the 2cm (50ppm) maximum allowable error. Can the general profession understand and do what is required? Martin stated that he would like to use the standard process he put in the draft, just relax the required numbers. There was much discussion about what standards can actually be met (realistically). It was decided that Martin and Tim would look into what standards the other states have.

Topographic Standards RCW 58.24.040(1):

Bruce presented a handout packet which contained a comparison of how other states are handling, or not, topographic standards. No other states have standards/requirements in place. Bruce is concerned about setting topo standards that only surveyors would be held to. Bruce is also concerned that if we establish rules/standards, those rules could be (or more likely probably would be) extended to apply to engineers doing topos for themselves or their own projects. Understand those resulting plans containing those topos ultimately go to contractors, cities/counties for plan approval and become of public record, etc. He stated that we need to be very careful with what we decide these surveys/maps should contain at a minimum and what statements of how items shown thereon were derived and are qualified (such as boundaries, improvement locations, etc.). Pat suggested a very basic checklist of what is required on a topo map (recorded, or not), which would include such things as: north arrow, bar scale, datum, how elevations (control) was derived, contour intervals, etc. Bruce said that he and Walt had discussed something similar and suggested that if a boundary is shown, a statement of how the boundary was derived (field survey, calc per deed/ref. map, GIS data, etc.) should also be required. Bruce and Walt will come up with a draft checklist and let the Board of Registration know that the SAB has decided to not set standards, but will present a checklist.

“Did you know?” articles

Copies of draft “Did you know?” articles from Steve Palmen and Paul Galli were presented and approved. The articles will be sent out via PLSO Listserv, The Evergreen Surveyor, and the BOR listserv or quarterly journal.

PLSO Update

Kris reported that there is a 95% chance that the PLSO will be moving to the DNR Tumwater Campus (just south of the Tumwater airport) around the end of the year. The location will make it easier for the public to access the office (easy on/off the freeway, free parking, and no security check in). A notice will go out at least a month before the move.

The PLSO has been going through a LEAN management process in regards to how maps/images coming in and out of the PLSO are handled. Some of the changes that have come about are:

- Duties shifted between staff members
- PLSO will no longer be doing unnecessary quality control checks for recording offices and surveyors
- If an error (for indexing purposes) is found on a survey map, and the correct answer cannot be determined from the face of the map, then the surveyor is contacted to provide the correct information for proper indexing.
- The PLSO will not be doing extensive tallying of the maps/images received from the recording offices, in order to determine if a page or map is missing. It will be up to the recording offices to be sure they send us ALL required maps and documents. If a page/map/document is found missing in the course of indexing, then the PLSO manager will contact the county for the missing item.
- Maps/documents will still be looked at for legibility compliance – both from a drafting and scanning source.
- Other changes in internal processing to reduce wasted time and effort.

Kris reported that since the LEAN management process was implemented in May 2015, it has helped with indexing productivity.

Kris reported that the PLSO imaging/scanning specialist is retiring at the end of December 2015 and the position will be double filled for two months, for training purposes. She expects the job announcement to go out mid-September.

Liaison to the Board of Registration

It was decided that the SAB no longer needed a liaison to the BOR, as long as both Boards can set aside 30-45 minutes in their meeting agendas to jointly discuss items of interest. Kris will coordinate with the BOR.

New Items

UAVs: Walt reported that the technology is changing and advancing quickly. He will continue to monitor the uses of UAVs for surveying/topographic purposes.

Jim Wengler and Aaron Blaisdell from the Board of Registration sat in on the last 15 minutes of the SAB meeting and reported that they have been working on the draft rules (definition of surveying). They will be sending out a “Concise Explanatory Statement” about the draft language.

Good of the Order

None

Next Steps

The next meeting of the SAB will be in Wednesday, December 9, 2015. It has not yet been determined if it will be at the Radisson Hotel (SeaTac) or the SeaTac Airport conference center.

Assignments

- SAB Members:
 - Martin & Tim: Research what other states are doing in regards to field traverse standards
 - Bruce & Walt: Create draft checklist for topographic maps
- Kris will
 - Set up meetings to coincide with the BOR committee meeting day.
 - Let LSAW chapters know that the PLSO staff is available for presentations.
 - Contact Aaron Blaisdell about the contact info for the utility companies.
 - Work on Monument Brochure
 - Contact Idaho & Oregon surveying associations for outreach/education purposes
 - Send out information statement to the recording offices about the blue notary stamps and the map fee as it pertains to BLAs.
 - Send link to new DNR website to Board members
 - Send out notice to surveyors and recording office about AMCs
 - Work with WACE and CRAB concerning the chip seal MOUs
 - Send out Paul & Steve’s “Did you know?” articles via PLSO Listserv, LSAW & BOR
 -
- Did you know? Article assignments:
 - Bruce & Martin: Applicability of WAC 332-130
 - Kris: Scanning (map legibility)
 - Kris & Casey: Notary ink color
 - Tim: Transfer of Death Deed
 - Walt: UAV mapping impact/considerations
 - Mel: Local Jurisdiction control of mapping
 - Bruce & Martin: Certificate on all recorded documents

- Steve: Highway construction monuments - - PART 2

Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 p.m.